



2017 Malcolm Fraser Oration – A Human Rights Legacy

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Thank you very much. It is a great honour and a great pleasure to have been invited to give this talk tonight. I was told that I should concentrate on refugees, which is perhaps not surprising, and I will be true to that, but first I do want to say something following some advice I was given by Michael Kirby. Shortly before I gave the Michael Kirby Oration, he said it's always a good idea to say something about the person after whom the oration is named.

Now, of course, as everyone here knows, the way in which Malcolm Fraser became Prime Minister was contentious, but what is often overlooked is what a committed humanitarian he was. It is not widely remembered that he visited Nelson Mandela in prison in 1983. That was way before most people were showing any concern whatever for Nelson Mandela.

He famously welcomed Indochinese refugees into Australia in the aftermath of the wars in Indochina, and he said, as I recall, that since we had been part of the problem we ought to be part of the solution. It's that kind of thinking which unfortunately we lack in politics these days. It is a matter of historic record that the Vietnamese community especially adored Malcolm Fraser, and so they should because he had a vision for a multicultural Australia in which all groups should respect each other and the Vietnamese community are perhaps the prime example of that contribution which Malcolm made.

Now, Glyn Davis referred to the Tampa episode, and the Tampa episode seemed bad enough at the time. There were some curious things about the Tampa episode. I assume everyone here remembers the circumstances. When talking about the Tampa episode to an audience that contains millennials or generation Y, they have no idea what you're talking about.

One of the interesting things about the Tampa episode was that it provoked some litigation to try and resolve the impasse because here we had the Tampa which had rescued 438 Hazara Afghan asylum seekers, which when it entered Australian waters off Christmas Island in order to put them ashore were stopped by the SAS who took control of the bridge at gunpoint.

In order to resolve the impasse, a number of us went to court and the matter was heard by Justice North in the Federal Court, who handed down his judgement at 2:15 in the afternoon Melbourne time on 11 September 2001. Eight or nine hours later the attack on America happened and everything seemed different after that. All of a sudden in the west you no longer had terrorists, you only had Muslim terrorists, and all of a sudden in Australia you no longer had boat people, you only had Muslim boat people. If I'm not mistaken, that's when the Howard Government started calling boat people illegal, and they called the exercise of shunting them offshore border

protection, creating the completely dishonest impression that we were being protected from criminals.

Everyone seems to have overlooked, and especially the Murdoch press seems to have overlooked, the fact that people who are fleeing terrorism probably are not terrorists themselves. People fleeing extremism are probably not extremists themselves. But it was the Tampa episode that introduced me to the realities of what was going on, because to be candid, I didn't know about it then. I was not aware, although I should have been, that we had a policy of mandatory indefinite detention of people who arrived here without a visa.

That reached its rather grim ultimate low point when a matter went to the High Court of Australia. It concerned a person who had come to Australia as a boat person and who had been refused a visa, who probably would have succeeded if he'd appealed that ruling but that would have meant another six months in the detention centre where he was. He was in Woomera, as I recall, and he couldn't stand it any longer so he said to the government just remove me from Australia. Now, this picks up the provisions of the *Migration Act* which says that if you're a non-citizen without a visa you must remain in detention until you get a visa or until you are removed from Australia. He'd been refused a visa so he asked to be removed from Australia. But there was a problem; [his estate is] Palestinian. They couldn't remove him because there was nowhere they could send him.

So the Howard Government, to their eternal disgrace, argued all the way to the High Court of Australia that that man, innocent of any offence, not suspected of being a risk to anyone, could stay in detention for the rest of his life. The High Court by majority four to three held that that's what the *Migration Act* means and with that meaning it was Constitutionally valid. Anyone with any instinct for human rights would understand how grotesque it is that you could detain an innocent human being for life even though they do not represent a risk to anyone at all.

By contrast, where Australia has reached, a couple of years ago there was a decision in the House of Lords in London. The English Parliament had passed an act which said that if a person is a terrorist and so couldn't be removed from the country and if they were a suspected terrorist, they could be detained for up to 12 months. This was said to be to preserve the life of the nation, and that's the key get-out clause in the *Human Rights Act* in Britain. The *Human Rights Act* mirrors the European Charter of Human Rights. The principle is that if you want to be a member of the EU you've got to have domestic legislation that mirrors the protections in the European Charter of Human Rights.

So, Britain had that and they knew that they could not possibly detain a person for any time at all unless they used a get-out clause which was to preserve the life of the nation. So the question goes to the House of Lords, is this legislation valid? I think it was a seven to two majority, or eight to one majority, the House of Lords said no, it is not valid and Lord Hoffmann, who was generally a conservative member of the House of Lords, concluded his speech by saying that the life of the nation is less threatened by terrorism than by laws like these, a very important idea which we have overlooked, I think to our peril, and certainly Malcolm Fraser was aware of the perils which that sort of approach, our approach, means for Australia.

Having got involved in the issue myself, perhaps belatedly, I learnt more and more about how human rights were being trashed by our government deliberately, consciously and to great damaging effect. The case which still haunts me perhaps more than any other concerned an Iranian family, mother and father and two daughters who at the relevant time were aged I think seven and 11. This family had fled Iran in terrible circumstances because they were a member of a small pre-Christian sect which was regarded by the majority as unclean, and they suffered the consequences of that assessment.

Anyway, they fled Iran, having lived there - their family had lived there for generations. They fled Iran, they got to Australia, they were put in detention in Woomera and after about 15 months or so they had typically lost their spirit. They had fallen into a very bad way but especially the 11-year-old girl. The 11-year-old girl had stopped eating, she'd stopped grooming herself, she'd stopped caring, she was frightened to go to the toilet block which was a couple of hundred metres from their cabin and so she would wet herself during the day and she'd wet the bed every night.

A psychiatrist went and visited the family at Woomera and delivered what is still I think the most devastating psych report that I'd ever read, delivered this to the government, to the department at least, saying this child was at extreme risk and for her protection the family should be removed from Woomera to a metropolitan detention centre where she could get daily psychiatric help which she desperately needed.

It's an interesting point of fact that at that time, at Woomera, like other remote detention centres, if you had an urgent need for psychiatric help you would get to see the visiting psychiatrist roughly once every six months, but she needed daily psychiatric help. So the department moved the family from Woomera in the South Australian desert to Maribyrnong in the western suburbs of Melbourne, and although the reason for moving them was that this 11-year-old kid needed daily psychiatric help, for the first few weeks of their time in Maribyrnong nobody came to see her, not a psychiatrist, not a psychologist, not a nurse, not a social worker, nobody at all. It was as if they hadn't arrived.

On a Sunday night, after they'd been there for a few weeks, the family, the mother and father and her sister were off in the mess hall having their dinner and alone in their cell little [Mahtab] took a bedsheet and hanged herself, aged 11. But she didn't know how to tie the knot properly so she was still suffocating when the family came back from dinner. They took her down and she and her mother were immediately taken to the general hospital nearby. They were accompanied by two ACM guards, so as a matter of legal analysis they were still in immigration detention.

Kon Karapanagiotidis, who had only recently set up the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre - the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre of which Malcolm was a patron and Tamie is now a patron - Kon heard about this. He'd been looking after their visa application. He heard about it; he went to the hospital about 9:30 that night. He said g'day to the guards, who knew him well. He said he just wanted to speak to the mother to see if there was anything he could do to help. The guards said to him, no you can't see them because lawyers visiting hours in immigration detention are nine to five, and they sent him away. He then rang me at home at 10 o'clock that night and I will never forget that telephone call. It is almost unthinkable that in a country like Australia we can so badly

treat a child that she will try and kill herself and then turn someone away who just wants to offer simple, human help, but that's how it was.

Another case which really reinforces how terrible our treatment is, how terrible our track record on human rights is was a case of a guy called Amin Mastipour. Amin was from Iran. He was in the Curtin Detention Centre with his daughter who was seven or eight years old. Curtin Detention Centre, in the South Australian desert. It's closed now but it was purpose-designed and built for the Howard Government. It was described by Philip Ruddock as the family-friendly detention centre. See if you can spot the deliberate contradiction in terms.

That was a very odd thing about the Curtin - the family-friendly detention centre. I had been invited over to South Australia to take part in a panel session about refugee things, shortly before Baxter opened. As it happens, a ground plan of the soon-to-be-opened Baxter Detention Centre fell off the back of a truck and landed on my desk. I was interested to see that the electric fence which surrounds it was described on the plan as a courtesy fence, and that piqued my interest because I wasn't sure what courtesy there could be to electrocuting people coming or going.

So I took the opportunity during the panel session - one of the other people in the panel was the Deputy Secretary of the Immigration Department in charge of the lock 'em up brigade, and I asked her, publicly, why it was that an electric fence was described on the plan as a courtesy fence. She looked at me coldly and said it's not an electric fence, it's an energised fence, which I suppose at 5000 volts makes a lot of difference.

In any event, Amin and his daughter were in their room in Baxter one day - these are two people who have arrived here asking for protection and who have committed no offence by doing so - and a couple of guards came into their room and ordered Amin to strip, because they thought he had a cigarette lighter, which of course is a terrible thing for an innocent person to have. He refused because there are cultural reasons, but in addition, his daughter was in the room.

So they roughed him up and handcuffed him and dragged him off to the management unit. The management unit, purpose-designed and built for the Howard Government, was a series of 13 small isolation cells, two-and-a-half metres square each of them, bare concrete surfaces. A mattress is the only furniture in the cell. The occupant of the cell has nothing to read, nothing to write with, no television, no radio, no form of distraction, no company because they're held in solitary confinement, but no privacy either because they are video monitored 24 hours a day and for that purpose the lights are kept on 24 hours a day.

Anyway, Amin barely coped with this and he would be allowed a 20-minute or 30-minute visit from his daughter in each 24 hours. But after he'd been in solitary for a couple of weeks, one day his daughter didn't come and he complained to the manager of the centre, an employee of the Immigration Department. He complained that his daughter hadn't come. The manager assured him that the reason was that the daughter had been taken into Port Augusta by the manager's wife and that she would be there the next day but the next day came and went and the daughter didn't arrive. The manager came in and explained to him that his daughter was now back in

Tehran and if he wanted to see her again he should abandon his claim for protection and return to Iran voluntarily.

He then had effectively a nervous breakdown and stayed in solitary for another six or eight weeks until an application was made to the court. When the matter went to court, the Immigration Department argued seriously in the Federal Court of Australia that courts cannot tell the Immigration Department how to treat people in immigration detention. There are no regulations that govern the way people are treated and their line was well, you the judge cannot tell us how to treat people.

The judge disagreed and ordered that Amin be removed from solitary and be moved to a different detention centre so he wouldn't have to face the people who had dealt with him this way. Not satisfied with that judgement, the Immigration Department appealed and on appeal the court said to counsel for the Immigration Department, look, what is it you're wanting to do with this man? Why are we having to hear this appeal; what do you want to do with him? They just said oh, we just want to prove the point.

All of that seemed bad enough and then in 2013 we got Abbott as Prime Minister and Morrison as Immigration Minister, and I have to confess there were moments when I hankered to have Howard and Ruddock back, which is a thought almost inconceivable. But Morrison did a very interesting thing. Morrison issued a directive, which is still on foot, a directive to all officers of the Immigration Department that that group previously called irregular maritime arrivals must thereafter be called illegal maritime arrivals, a direct lie, something calculated to mislead everyone who heard it, because to call people illegal suggests that they've broken a law and they hadn't broken a law.

Now, Morrison also disgraced himself in many, many other ways as Immigration Minister, not the least of which was in February 2014 when, as many of you will recall, a man held on Manus Island called Reza Barati was killed. In fact, more people have died in immigration detention in Nauru and Manus than have been resettled in other countries. Anyway, Reza Barati died and Morrison went public and said that Reza Barati had escaped from the detention centre and had been killed outside the centre by locals. That was at one level plausible because the locals in Manus and the locals in Nauru despise the refugees who are held there and their governments only tolerate their presence because it means a lot of money for them.

Anyway, although that was plausible it turned out to be false because quite soon afterwards some of us received letters from several of Reza Barati's friends describing how he had died. What happened was this. He was running back towards the cabin which he occupied with his friend Benham Satah and Benham Satah said he saw Reza running back towards the cabin. He was then approached by an employee of a subcontractor to the Department of Immigration, who is named, and this man had a long stick in his hands, and at the far end of the long stick there were two long nails driven through the stick. He swung it at Reza Barati and hit him on the scalp twice with it. Reza Barati fell to the ground bleeding profusely from the scalp and then he was surrounded by 12 guards, all employed by subcontractors to the Immigration Department.

They took it in turns to kick him in the head and in the torso and then, as Benham Satah's letter explains, another man, also employed by a subcontractor, picked up a large rock - and he's named, by the way - picked up a large rock, brought it crashing down on his head and he said, that killed him and I know it killed him because the next time one of the guards kicked him he didn't flinch. That was the way Reza Barati was killed and that is a measure of the way in which people are treated in our offshore detention facilities.

Incidentally, as I say, Abbott and Morrison came into their positions in 2013. It is a matter of continuing shame in this country that the 2013 election was fought with both major political parties trying to out promise each other on the cruelty with which they would treat people who arrived in Australia by boat seeking asylum. I hope we never, ever see another election campaign in this country in which cruelty is the major selling point.

It occurred to me at the time if they were promising cruelty to kittens it probably wouldn't have worked but promising cruelty to human beings seemed to be a selling point. What's the explanation for it? Well, they had a couple of interesting explanations. One was that they're very worried about people drowning. Now, of course it's tragic when people drown but anyone who looks at history understands that people perish in their quest for protection, for safety. That's just a sad fact.

The drownings excuse though is rather odd because it amounts to this. We are so worried about you drowning that if you don't drown we'll imprison you, and then they sharpened it up saying we will treat you so badly in prison that other people will be dissuaded from trying to seek safety in Australia. Now, it's bad enough to think that a person will be punished because they didn't drown. It's worse to think that they're being mistreated in order to shape the conduct of other people. You do not instrumentalise human beings in order to achieve a purpose but that's what we're doing, and as I say, none of them have committed any offence at all.

The other reason which they advanced from time to time was well, you can't save them all, and I remember Tony Abbott notoriously said at one point that he thought that probably the parable of the Good Samaritan would have been different if there had been a number of people beside the road who needed help. A very curious thing; anyway, he did say that.

I had a very interesting experience recently. I'm helping some people make a film about the refugee issue. They've cast me in a sort of David Attenborough role.

Thank you for laughing [laughs]. One of the places we went to in May was the island of Lesbos, which is obviously part of Greece, but Lesbos is only four or five kilometres off the coastline of Turkey and so it has been a point where a lot of refugees who have come through Turkey have hopped across in order to seek protection in the European Union. There was a beach on Lesbos which every now and then gets a very big tide and a lot of starfish get washed up with the tide, and as the tide recedes the starfish are stranded on the sand if they're left there they dry out in the sun and die.

A little girl who lived in Mytilini, which is the main town in Lesbos, was very distressed about this and went down to the beach, and a grownup very sensible said to her you know, you can't save them all. Her response was wordlessly to bend down, pick one up, throw into the ocean and then she said well, I've saved that one. That seemed to me to be a very good answer to the Coalition's suggestion that we have to mistreat all asylum seekers because we can't save them all. It's as if we think that they all want to come here, and as I'll tell you in a minute, that is largely untrue.

Incidentally, on the same trip after we left Lesbos we went to Jordan. Jordan is very interesting because Jordan has a population of about nine-and-a-half million, so less than half of Australia's population. It's not rich in resources, and it has the interesting geographical feature that it has a common border with Israel on the west, Iraq on the east and Syria on the north, and so depending on political circumstances from time to time, Jordan has experienced quite large numbers of people walking across the border into Jordan seeking a place of safety.

In the last couple of years, Jordan has received about a million informal refugees, that is to say people who have just walked across without an invitation and they've asked for safety. They are all of them, or nearly all of them, accommodated in the community where they are allowed to work and they are given all of the hospitality which is characteristic of the Middle East. The curious fact is that having - they've received more refugees in the last couple of years than Australia has received since we signed the Refugees Convention 60-odd years ago, and yet Jordan is not a signatory to the Refugees Convention.

They are performing far better than Australia is, even though they are not signatories to the Refugees Convention. They understand the way in which human beings ought to be treated. Because one of the worst things about Australia is that we have somehow been persuaded by our so-called political leaders that these people are not entitled to be treated like human beings, they're not entitled to be treated the way we would want to be treated if we were in their circumstances.

The Tampa episode produced the Pacific Solution, a rather unfortunate name but they were working in a hurry. It was announced I think on the second or third day of the litigation that the Government had come to an arrangement with PNG and Nauru respectively. Nauru is a very interesting place for us to warehouse refugees because it's not widely remembered that Nauru's land area is smaller than Tullamarine Airport and yet somehow we think that it can handle refugees, and we are so tiny and cramped of course we couldn't possibly accommodate them.

The Pacific Solution sort of petered out in 2006 or '07, but it was revived again by the Labor Government in 2012 and from the middle of 2013 there was a rule implemented that anyone arriving by boat without a visa would be sent offshore. Before that people used to be assessed pretty carefully to see whether or not they could be sent offshore, but the assessment was fairly brutal. I spoke to a doctor who had spent time working with IHMS, International Health and Medical Services, who provide the medical services for Immigration Department. She worked with IHMS on Christmas Island. Christmas Island is a little speck of Australian sovereignty in the northwest. It's where the Tampa was trying to put its unexpected passengers ashore.

This doctor told me that when the refugees arrived on Christmas Island they had typically had six or eight days in an uncomfortable boat and typically they had come from countries which were landlocked so they'd never seen the ocean let alone been on it. They'd typically had not enough food to eat. They'd typically had no opportunity to change their clothes and they typically arrived in clothes caked with their own excrement.

She explained that they would be interviewed by officers of the Department of Immigration before they were given the opportunity to wash and change, a little humiliation which was a warning of things to come. She explained also that if they had any medication on them it would be taken and disposed of. If they had any medical documentation it would be taken and disposed of. If they had any medical prosthetics like false teeth, hearing aids, spectacles, prosthetic limbs they would be taken and not returned.

She told the story of one woman who had not been sent offshore because it was thought she was insane, but no one could tell quite what the nature of her insanity was because if she had any medical documentation with her it had been thrown away. So this doctor decided to speak to the woman for as long as it took to figure out what was wrong. It was difficult because they didn't have a language in common and the interpreter was in Sydney, so 4000 miles away, at the end of a telephone.

Eventually, the doctor worked out that this woman's problem was that she was incontinent of urine and she couldn't leave her cabin without having urine running down her leg. So the doctor said to immigration we need incontinence pads for her. Their first response was we don't do those. She insisted and so they relented and agreed that she could have four incontinence pads per day, not enough, but they said any more than that would be a fire hazard.

You get the mentality of the organisation. The people who are on Nauru now have almost all of them been there for the past four years because although more than 80 per cent of them have been assessed as refugees, there is nowhere to send them. New Zealand offered to take several hundred of them but Australia said no you can't because they'll use that as a back door to get into Australia. Other countries as I understand it look at them and say well hang on, you're sort of Australia's responsibility, we've got refugees to look after, no point coming to us.

The idea of them resettling in Nauru is very unattractive because the locals are very hostile to them. You may recall the episode a couple of years ago when Omid Masoumali set himself alight and died on Nauru. Omid Masoumali and his family had been assessed on Nauru as refugees, but they faced the prospect of spending an unknowable number of years living in a hostile community on Nauru. He was so desperate at that idea that he went into a public area, doused himself with lighter fluid and set himself alight, and he died. The most astute political comment I think I've ever seen was made by Cathy Wilcox, a cartoonist of considerable skill because she had a cartoon the next day of a man engulfed in flames and the caption simply read, not drowning.

When *The Guardian* newspaper revealed or disclosed publicly several thousand files kept in connection with people held on Nauru, it showed that there were hundreds of cases of child sexual abuse where in particular guards had been sexually abusing refugee children. It also recorded very

substantial levels of mental harm amongst people held on Nauru, mental harm which was demonstrably the result of the way in which they had been held, not a result of the circumstances that made them flee but a result of the way they were held in their attempt to seek a place of safety.

In Manus similarly things have been pretty tough. Just two days ago I received a copy of a letter written by a number of asylum seekers held on Nauru - sorry, on Manus I should say - and it includes the following passages:

We have been detained in a closed detention for more than four years. Any bad physical and mental condition that can be imagined has happened for us: killing, suicide, dying, serious injured in body like losing eye, serious damage in mind like severe depression and a lot of different that we experience in detention. All detainees are suffering from PTSD, some of them never back to normal life, ever. Manus Island is a malaria zone. Many detainees have contracted malaria. Some of them are suffering from high humidity and for example they've been using nasal sprays because of asthma.

There's then a reference to Reza Bharati's death.

After the ruling of Supreme Court our condition got worse.

You will recall the PNG Supreme Court ruled that the detention centre on Manus was unconstitutional. It may be a sobering fact to think that Papua New Guinea's human rights standards exceed Australia's human rights standards. At least their Supreme Court was able to say that locking up innocent people indefinitely was unconstitutional, unlike the situation in Australia.

After the ruling of Supreme Court our condition got worse. We have been living in limbo for more than four years. Now another limbo added to our previous limbo, in other words, we are also waiting for decision of PNG Supreme Court these days. The condition in here is in breach of PNG's Constitution and in breach of our personal liberty so Supreme Court announced that here is illegal and unconstitutional and it must be closed, but there is no deadline for them to close here. It has caused that another limbo added to previous running.

Immigration Department is going to continue the processing by the end of October 2017, breach our personal liberty and continuing of detention. What does that mean? We are exhausted and tortured people for more than four years, not normal people. This deteriorating condition are going on and governments don't care that some human have been detained for this long time. In Port Moresby sick refugees who have gone for treatment have been attacked by groups of armed men. All of us respect PNG and its nationality but we don't want to resettle in PNG. PNG is not qualified for resettlement of refugees at the moment.

Hamed Shamshiripour died in PNG because of lack of responsibility in PNG. In fact, PNG don't feel any responsibility for us. As Tony Abbott announced, we were and are some part their policy to stop the boats. Malcolm Turnbull have been continuing that policy. In election campaign of Australia 2016 Malcolm Turnbull said if we resettle them in Australia then boats would start to

come. It 100 per cent means that we are here as hostage, not for processing. Because of this hostage-making policy people who are accepted as refugee are still detained for long time. Is it 1951 Convention for Refugees when the reality of detention is not for processing but for torturing or for hostage-making. Why will it have to continue?

Australian Government want to make an example of us to show to others not to come to Australia by boat. They made and are making this example in the cruellest way. As you know, there are - blah-blah-blah - unlike claim of Australian Government we do not want to impose ourselves to Australia. Meanwhile, they are not happy. When they aren't happy to accept us so we not happy to come to Australia. Peter Dutton and Malcolm Turnbull always publish that [transferees] just want to settle in Australia. This is totally ridiculous. We said before, we are saying now that we just took refuge in Australia because at that time we didn't have any other choices.

So much for the idea that people will be coming here because after all we're the best place in the world. Most people who live in Australia think Australia is a great place to be but if you're a refugee, not so good.

The other thing about Manus that is interesting, I had an interesting meeting a little while ago with some former health workers who had worked on Manus and one of them really captured things. One of other people I should explain who was in this meeting was a senior Labor parliamentarian, someone I've known for a long time, because I don't hang out with politicians generally speaking but I've known him since before he was in politics and invited him along because I thought he'd be interested.

So, one of the doctors really caught people's attention. He's not a bleeding heart. He is someone who has just spent his professional career working in the prison system in Australia. He decided to go to Manus because the pay was good and he said that when he arrived at the compounds at Manus his immediate inner reaction was this is what the concentration camps must have been like. Within a few days of working inside, he said the conditions they're held in and the way they're treated was 100 times worse than he'd seen in any Australian prison, including maximum security prison. By the time he'd finished his tour of duty he was convinced that the barely-concealed purpose of that treatment was to break their spirit so they would abandon their claim for protection and return to the country they had fled.

At that point, the meeting broke up because what else can you say when you get that kind of information. The parliamentarian stayed on and we were catching up on the news and he said that he was shocked to hear what that doctor had said, and I believe him. He is an honest person, and he said, and I believe him, that he'd never heard facts like that. Then, without missing a beat, he said mind you, it would be political suicide for Labor to take a soft line on boats. In that one sentence I think he betrayed the poverty of Australian politics now. It is a terrible indictment.

Most Australians cannot visit Nauru or Manus Island in order to see what's going on for themselves. Journalists are unable to visit those detention centres in order to see and explain to Australians what is going on. Even onshore detention centres are difficult to visit because you have to jump through all sorts of hoops to get there, including this; you have to know the name of the

person you want to visit and that's not always an easy thing if you're just generally concerned about conditions. The consequence is that most of us have no real knowledge about what is going on inside detention centres. The facts are covered up by a government eager to make sure that we swallow the lie that these people are criminals from whom we need to be protected when the truth is they're innocent human beings who are being routinely tortured and mistreated.

In the last 15 years or so of his life, Malcolm was very concerned about these issues and he disapproved profoundly. There is such a striking difference between his approach to refugees and the current approach to refugees, which is probably the worst in the western world. He is an example in his time. His disapproval of what we are doing was characteristic of Malcolm's approach. He was an example of something we don't have any longer: he was a political leader and we do not have in Australia any political leadership, which is why this country's behaviour has fallen as low as it has fallen.

I want to finish by just making the obvious point that we are all in Malcolm Fraser's debt for the standards which he followed, the standards which he believed in, the standards which are probably at the heart of most Australians but he was a leader who was prepared to follow those standards, and now we have none. Now we are living in a country which is betraying its own values because of the dishonesty and self-interest of our parliamentarians. Thank you.